



ABOUT VA 2018



Vetenskap & Allmänhet



WHAT DOES VA DO?

VA (Public & Science) is a non-profit Swedish organisation whose purpose is to promote openness and dialogue between researchers and society. Increased dialogue between researchers and other parts of society and greater participation in science are key for solving the large societal challenges that we face.

Since our foundation in 2002, we have been carrying out surveys, gathering knowledge and testing new formats and activities for public engagement and dialogue. We also carry out advocacy work, engaging in public debate and in dialogue with decision-makers at national and European level.

The organisation is funded through membership fees, project grants and an annual grant from the Swedish Ministry of Education and Research.

DIALOGUE IS KEY

VA is an expert in dialogue, public engagement, open science and science communication. We seek to enable:

- the public to participate in and to understand how research works and its role in society
- researchers to understand the importance of dialogue and engagement with society and to provide them with effective methods for achieving this
- decision makers to have access to science and recognise the value of dialogue and collaboration between researchers and society at large.

VA wants the whole of society, in different ways, to be involved in research.

” *We seek to improve the conditions and opportunities for natural scientists. Many work in research and development. It is natural for us to collaborate with Vetenskap & Allmänhet as VA promotes dialogue between research and society at large.*

Per Klingbjer, Director of the Swedish Association of Professional Scientists



VA (Public & Science) was founded in 2002 and its members consist of some 80 organisations, such as authorities, universities, businesses, adult education associations and research

funding bodies. In addition, it has a number of individual members. For information about membership of VA and an up-to-date list of its members, see www.v-a.se/membership



EXAMPLES OF CURRENT PROJECTS



Researchers' Night (*ForskarFredag*)

VA is the national coordinator of *ForskarFredag*, Sweden's most widespread science festival, run as part of European Researchers' Night. On the last Friday of September each year, the public is invited to engage in dialogue with researchers and participate in hands-on activities, competitions, exhibitions, shows and much more. In some 30 cities across Sweden, *ForskarFredag* shows that research is fun and relevant to our everyday lives.

The mass experiment

Our nationwide citizen science project in which pupils help researchers carry out real research is a part of *ForskarFredag*. Every year since 2009 thousands of young people have been contributing to new knowledge in topics such as source criticism, climate change and nutrition. In 2018, VA is collaborating with the Swedish Museum of Natural History in an experiment about ladybirds, which combines biology and artificial intelligence.

ORION and SciShops

VA often participates in European projects. In ORION, we are seeking to help research performing and funding organisations in life sciences become more open towards society. VA is one of nine partners in this EU-funded Horizon2020 project. In SciShops, we are promoting the growth of science shops and community-based research throughout Europe, together with 17 other partners. A science shop is an entity through which citizens and community groups can seek the help of researchers to solve local and regional issues.

Researchers' Grand Prix (*Forskar Grand Prix*)

A contest in which researchers have just four minutes to present their research in an exciting, inspiring and easy-to-understand way. The contestants are trained and coached, and their performance judged by an audience and a jury jointly deciding the winner. Regional heats are run in several cities around Sweden as part of European Researchers' Night. The winners compete in a national final in Stockholm.

JOIN OUR NETWORK!

Organisations as well as **individuals** are welcome to become members of VA. As a member you will receive regular newsletters and invitations to seminars and other activities. Benefits also include access to studies and expert advice on science communication, and you are welcome to influence and take part in our work. Our broad network also provides opportunities for new collaborations, both national and international.

Read more at v-a.se/membership

” *The Association of Swedish Engineering Industries creates the conditions to make Sweden an attractive country for technology companies to work and to strengthen competitiveness. Strong research is one of the prerequisites for success. Membership of VA helps us to highlight this.*

Klas Wählberg, CEO of the Association of Swedish Engineering Industries

CONTACT US

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Facebook, Instagram & Twitter: [vetenskapoallm](https://www.facebook.com/vetenskapoallm)

Read VA's latest news in English at: v-a.se/news/

” *The Swedish Adult Education Association promotes education, learning and culture. Adult education is based on knowledge, facts and science. We therefore value VA's work building bridges between the research community and the wider public.*

David Samuelsson, Secretary General of the Swedish Adult Education Association

” *The research undertaken at Malmö University will contribute to the development of a sustainable society. In order for this to happen, it is important that our research findings reach society at large. For us, supporting VA (Public & Science)'s efforts to communicate research is an obvious thing to do.*

Kerstin Tham, Vice-Chancellor of Malmö University

CALENDAR 2018

- 4–6 April **PCST**. VA presentations at Public Communication of Science and Technology in Dunedin, New Zealand
- 18 April **Forum for Science Communication** in Gothenburg
- 3 July **Activities during Almedalen week** in Visby
- 9–14 July **ESOF**. VA sessions at the EuroScience Open Forum in Toulouse, France
- 28 September **European Researchers' Night ForskarFredag** across Sweden
- 10 October **VA's annual conference** and annual general meeting in Stockholm
- November National final of the **Researchers' Grand Prix, Forskar Grand Prix**
- December Annual **VA Barometer** published (Swedish attitudes towards science and researchers)